

In this hour of suffering, our Nation is thankful. We have been inspired by acts of courage and goodness: Coast Guardsmen and military personnel reaching out of helicopters and lifting victims from rooftops; firefighters wading through mud and debris to search for victims and survivors; doctors and nurses defying danger so their patients might live. Many of those who saved others lost their own homes and were separated from their own families. And many stories of heroism and rescue will never be told because they are known to God alone.

We're thankful for a spirit, seen across the gulf coast, that faces the worst and chooses to hope. We're thankful as well for the many ordinary citizens who heard the cries of neighbors and answered them. Across the country, Americans saw the hungry and gave them something to eat, saw the thirsty and gave them something to drink, saw strangers and invited them in. One man who was rescued and given shelter after the storm said, "I didn't think there was so much love in the world."

In this hour of suffering, our Nation is also mindful of the work ahead. Through this tragedy, great duties have come to our Nation. The destruction of this hurricane was beyond any human power to control, but the restoration of broken communities and disrupted lives now rests in our hands. And we accept this responsibility not as a burden or a chore but as an opportunity to serve our fellow Americans, as they would do for us.

This task will measure our unity as a people. Americans of every race and religion were touched by this storm, yet some of the greatest hardship fell upon citizens already facing lives of struggle, the elderly, the vulnerable, and the poor. And this poverty has roots in generations of segregation and discrimination that closed many doors of opportunity. As we clear away the debris of a hurricane, let us also clear away the legacy of inequality. Let us deliver new hope to communities that were suffering before the storm. As we rebuild homes and businesses, we will renew our promise as a land of equality and decency. And one day, Americans will look back at the response to Hurricane Katrina and say that our country grew not only in prosperity but in character and justice.

On this National Day of Prayer and Remembrance, we pledge ourselves to the demanding work of revival and renew the faith and hope that will carry that work to completion. In the worst of storms and in the rush of flood waters, even the strongest faith can be tested. Yet the Scriptures assure us, "Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it."

So now we go forward, confident in the good heart of America and trusting that even among the ruins, the love of God remains at work.

May God bless and keep the souls of the lost. May His love touch all those in need, and may He always watch over the United States of America. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. at the Washington National Cathedral.

Proclamation 7930—National POW/MIA Recognition Day, 2005

September 16, 2005

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

In every generation, members of our Armed Forces have answered the call of service in our Nation's hour of need. These patriots have defended our freedom and way of life, triumphed over brutal enemies, and answered the prayers of millions. On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, we honor the Americans who have been prisoners of war and recognize them for enduring unimaginable hardships while serving in military conflicts around the globe. We also remember those who are still missing in action, and we renew our commitment to keep searching until we have accounted for every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, and Marine missing in the line of duty.

On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the flag of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia is flown over the White House, the Capitol, the Departments of State, Defense, and Veterans Affairs, the Selective Service System Headquarters, the National Vietnam

Veterans and Korean War Veterans Memorials, U.S. Military Installations, national cemeteries, and other locations across our country. The flag is a reminder of our continued commitment to those brave patriots imprisoned while serving in conflicts around the world and of our pledge to continue to achieve the fullest possible accounting for all our men and women in uniform who are still missing. Americans are blessed with the freedom made possible by the service and sacrifice of so many. On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, our entire Nation honors and pays special tribute to our prisoners of war and those who remain missing.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Friday, September 16, 2005, as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in saluting all American POWs and those missing in action who valiantly served our country. I call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 19, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on September 20.

Proclamation 7931—National Hispanic Heritage Month, 2005
September 16, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Throughout our history, America has been a land of diversity and has benefitted from the contributions of people of different backgrounds brought together by a love of liberty.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate the achievements of Hispanic Americans and the significant role they have played in making our Nation strong, prosperous, and free.

The contributions of Hispanic Americans have made a positive impact on every part of our society. Americans of Hispanic descent are astronauts and athletes, doctors and teachers, lawyers and scientists. The vibrancy of our Nation's Hispanic performers enriches music, dancing, and the arts. Hispanic Americans serve at every level of government, including as Attorney General of the United States and Secretary of Commerce. Latino entrepreneurs are starting and growing businesses all across America, creating jobs and opportunities. The hard work and determination of Hispanic Americans continue to inspire all those who dream of a better life for themselves and their families.

Our Nation's Hispanic community has contributed to the advance of freedom abroad and to the defense of freedom at home. In every generation, Hispanic Americans have served valiantly in the United States military. Today there are more than 200,000 Hispanic Americans serving in the Armed Forces, and our Nation is grateful for their courage and sacrifice. In addition, thousands of Hispanic Americans are helping to defend and protect our homeland by serving as police officers and firefighters. All Americans are thankful for their daily work in helping to keep our Nation safe.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we join together to recognize the proud history and rich culture of Hispanic Americans. To honor the achievements of Hispanic Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 100-402, as amended, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating September 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 15 through October 15, 2005, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the